ISSUE #10 – APRIL 2026 • PERSONA SOUTHEAST ASIA TOUR ZINE HAUL • THE COUNTERFORCE CROSSWORD PUZZLE • HOW TO BUILD YOUR OWN BAND WEBSITE • BROKE ASS COMIC ZONE #2 • INTERVIEW WITH ERGOT • COLUMNS • REVIEWS

THE COUNTERFORCE

What is this? *The Counterforce* is an initiative to push back against the corporate capture of hardcore punk. Social media apps and streaming platforms dominate how we interact online, including how we share and distribute our music and ideas. The corporations that run these platforms extract massive profits from us, which they use to fund and facilitate exploitation, war, and genocide. Meanwhile, our independent and underground alternatives have eroded.

The goal of *The Counterforce* is to strengthen and grow the hardcore punk underground that still exists outside of this corporate capture. Rather than funnel punk into profit-driven walled gardens, we want to foment and encourage a culture that is autonomous and independent. This is not just a nostalgic, backward-facing project—we want to explore new alternatives for spreading hardcore punk online and offline.

You are reading issue #10 of the print version of *The Counterforce*.

Find the files to print and distribute this zine (and others like it) yourself online at **https://the-counterforce.org**

There, you will also find the other arms of *The Counterforce*:

A Web Zine

This site publishes reviews, letters, scene reports, profiles/interviews, rants, and how-to guides, all with an emphasis on projects that try to exist outside of corporate platforms.

In part, we hope this will encourage human-driven curation, recommendation, and discovery. Find out about new bands that aren't on the streaming sites. Submit a review of your own band. Compile a scene report or show review and send it in. We also publish articles and DIY how-to guides to help empower other punks to build and participate in a scene that's less centered around evil apps.

All this is published online, but also compiled into regular print zine editions to bring paper back to the punk show (like the version you are reading now).

A directory of similarly aligned projects

The Internet is breaking down. Websites outside of a handful of apps have slowly disappeared, and the ones that are still out there are harder and harder to find.

The Counterforce provides a directory of these websites: blogs, archives, distros, zines, radio shows and podcasts... anywhere hardcore punk can be found online (and maybe offline too!).

A place to experiment with and learn about alternatives

It's easy to shit on the corporate social media and streaming platforms, but what other options are there? There are alternatives and we try them out—public online show calendars, open-source social media, self-hosted music sharing—and encourage other punks to join us.

THE COUNTERFORCE IS A DISTRIBUTED AND COMMUNITY PROJECT

Find everything online at: the-counterforce.org

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CANADA

if sending us something other than a letter (like a record/tape for review) from outside Canada you must indicate it has a declared value under $20. OTherwise, Canada will apply duties and taxes which we cannot afford to pay!

PRINT THIS ZINE

This zine is available on our website as a PDF you can print out and distribute yourself.

Bands like X-FORCE or CONSERVATIVE MILITARY IMAGE become commonplace, people casually toss out slurs, and every capital H hardcore band has at long last re-established a safe space wherein their every whim is catered to. They lurch to and fro, from one Hoosier basement to another, and perform their apex masculinity drag show revue, unconfronted by opposing thought.

I'm the victim of an addict who was the victim of an addict who was the sister of addicts, and whatever contempt or resentment I may hold towards erstwhile parental figures, I don't wish death on any of them. In response, I chose straight edge for 13 years of my life. It allowed me structure and control in a complicated world. It allowed me solace and distance from the addiction that has plagued my family and friend groups for generations. I broke edge 9 years ago this September. I regret nothing. Straight edge made me a better person in many ways, but never better than anyone else.

This is a common theme throughout these four meandering, not at all brief tracks: superiority, supremacy. Four guys dressing up ridiculous, reactionary, crypto-Christian vengeance in X-swatches and dunks, an impotent rage lobbed against a boogeyman they'll never know within the confines of the top-40, five-band Convulse package deal tour infrastructure, and they'll never see when the tour ends and they return to the Demolisten podcast booth.

It's a bit, and a bad one, and the righteousness falls apart real quicklike 'cause at the end of the day, these people are dumb Indiana hicks too inert to have ever left their hovel, too stupid to conceive of a reality beyond their own, too scared to confront the structures and apparatus that perpetuates the addiction they vilify, and fortunate enough to have only ever experienced their carefully constructed fantasy of violence.

You can find this yourself if you really must subject yourself to this 10-minute aural atrocity. It's the sort of uninspired dog shit one would expect from this end of the spectrum, nothing ventured and nothing iterated upon in the least; hell, even THE RIVAL MOB (my least favorite hardcore band of all time until 10am today) had the good sense to rip off decent bands while hating AIDS patients, and the FUs wrote a magnum opus whilst raw-dogging the stars 'n' stripes.

—Ralph Rivera

A digital zine distro

Major punk fanzines of the past fell victim to the rising costs of printing and shipping. We publish printable PDFs of our zines online for anyone to print and distribute themselves, and encourage other zinesters to submit their own.

What if instead of shipping zines around the world, any punk anywhere could log on, download some PDFs and scam some copies to have a fully stocked, PWYC zine distro at the next show? **Print-It-Yourself!**

A hard line against contributing to further corporate capture of our subculture:

- No links to Instagram, Spotify, Linktree, Discord, or other corporate platforms.
- No coverage of releases that are on major labels, or only available digitally on corporate streaming platforms.
- Always independent and not-for-profit.

For expanding the hardcore punk mutual aid autonomous zone.

For facilitating human curation and recommendation.

For hardcore punk with context and politics.

Against celebrity, ladder climbers, clout chasers and influencers.

Against the algorithmic flattening of our subculture.

Against the capitalist death machine and the corporate capture of hardcore punk.

Contributors to this issue: *Aaron Meyer, Arthur Rot, Crash JT, Marginal, Martin Force, Ralph Rivera, Slim, Stunk & Taylor Joy. Cover and layout by Taylor Joy.*

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ZINES I GOT ON TOUR IN ASIA AND TRAVELLING HOME

by Arthur Rot

In January, I was lucky to join NYC queercore band PERSONA on tour in Asia. (Thank you AJ!!!) Every show was organized by a collective, some active for over 20 years (CRUX). The group effort and longevity of DIY in Asia was a strong antidote to the passing trends, social hierarchies, and self-importance we're conditioned into in our region of the world. I came back feeling less guarded and more enthusiastic. I met a woman in Tokyo who said that the underground in Asia wasn't taking itself too seriously, and I'm trying to hold onto that idea — at the end of the day, we are all just fools messing around together on the fringes of society because we like it.

Shoutout to Palong and Mernie, MUTILATED NOISE Records + HAB HABAN POBLACION (Makati/Manila), HARDCORE HOPE Collective (Batangas City), CRUX OF RESISTANCE AND EXISTENCE Collective (Legazpi City), SUCK GLUE BOYS (Taipei), MOUHOI and RICE (Hong Kong) and everyone who put us on, took care of us, showed us around, cooked us amazing food, took massive group photos, traded tapes and zines, and helped me keep belief in DIY networks alive in a time of isolation and repression at home.

SIEGE Fanzine #5 Baguio City, Philippines (2024)

Edgy fanzine dedicated to "those who are still awake and not afraid to be yourself." Impassioned "anti-woke" political horseshoe vibes which I mostly didn't read. Amid diatribes against the "Leftist Manila scene" and its "anarcho-gossip," there is a thorough interview with YOUTH ALTERATION, an all-girl hardcore band from Bulacan Province who

One issue with the hyper-localized omnibus format is that someone, let's say a Midwesterner like myself, will pick up the comp for a band they really like, say ADVOIDS for example, and that Midwesterner will have to listen to the entire A and B sides to get to those four tracks (well played, guys). And they'll probably reflect on how, when you're organizing a hyper localized omnibus, it would likely hurt someone's feelings if they don't get asked to participate, which is how you get bands like DECADENCE on "This Is Boston, Not LA," or, for a more relevant example, MUNCHKINHEAD right hereabouts. This is possibly the worst band I've ever heard; to wit, during my first go-through, upon reaching the positively putroidal, post-egg runoff "ABC," I put the walkman down for a couple weeks before returning and finally reaching the ADVOIDS track. I'm considering recording over this dogshit so I never have to subject myself to it again. Absolutely unreal that anyone put this much work into a project and then paid money to include these three cuts, which include, and I wish I was making this up, a "funny" "Louie Louie" cover. Jesus Christ, y'all shoulda yanked the surfboards outta DIODE's hands and dragged them into the studio for their session.

As you can see, I've really let the 'HEAD's "efforts" eclipse an otherwise interesting and frequently awesome piece of plastic. UNCANNI and the almighty ADVOIDS are the stand-outs for me, high energy and nasty and a little off. ANIMATED VIOLENCE seems like they'd be great live, but I'd love to get my hands on the lyrics to "Voice of Change" before I give them a wholehearted endorsement. GROTTO veers into oncoming traffic, smashing dead on with the MINNEAPOLIS URANIUM CLUB BAND, before fleeing the scene 'n' hoping no one would notice. The intermissions contributed by SACRED BATHERS do a great job of directing the flow of traffic. REARRANGED FACE evoke the SPITS and SECRET PROSTITUTES, but luckily for them it's a bit more of the latter. BIG SHOT's inclusions are neither offensive nor bothersome. I honestly dug LACKEY's "Stop Trespassing," but I wish they had played around more with the speed and intensity displayed there rather than DEVOlving into the uninteresting, quirked-up synth stylings of their other two offerings.

The good is great, the bad is fucking wretched, and everything else will appeal to many.

Scoop it up if ya can (Sorry State still has copies in stock)

—Ralph Rivera

X-Force – Demo CS

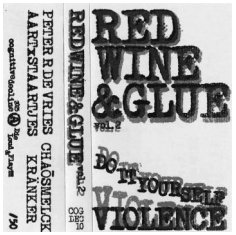
A lyrical snippet, before we begin in earnest: *"Because you're a fucking retard / shoving shit up your nose / because you're a fucking retard / swiggin' shit down your throat."*

Let's ignore for a second that this is some of the weakest attempt at flow, rhythm, and rhyme scheme; this is straight edge for the absolute lowest common denominator. Absolutely pathetic. Everyone from Convulse Records to Rage Deposit to the four goons responsible for writing this shit should be embarrassed.

I guess it should come as no surprise that a bunch of white guys from central Indiana are high-functioning conservatives. The "street cleaning" mantra typical of this end of hardcore, its pitch and cadence ringing in harmony with every fascist excretion, has long disgusted me, but this feels particularly brain dead as the state contemporaneously makes very real moves to cleanse the streets of every single person it deems unworthy of life and freedom. I don't really think you can separate this release from the context we've been in livin' in since 2016, (and since 2001, 1964, 1865, 1776, and on and on and on), and I don't think you can ignore the parallel rhetoric we're inundated endlessly with from above, either. The mainstream has tossed out all pretense to civility and resistance, and the underground, for all its vaunted ideals, despite the lip service disdain X-FORCE directs towards "corporate" hardcore, follows suit.

I saw them in 2019 in Milwaukee & Chicago and was mesmerized by their riffs, inspiring lyrics, and overall tightness they displayed as a band. Fast Forward to 2025 they're back with a new EP and it's a killer! From their opening song "One-on-One" to the organ manner of "If You Were Mine," THE SMARTHEARTS songs' each land a an amazing musical punch to your ears. The biggest song of the album though is "Not Forgotten." Not only does this song get me through an average school day, but it is the song that we need in a time of ever-growing fascism in our world and genocide in Palestine. This album has it all and is the thing that will lift your spirits as it has mine.

—Aaron Meyer



V/A – Red Wine & Glue vol. 2 Comp CS

"Do It Yourself Violence". This is a "compilation tape of four DIY powerviolence and d-beat projects" from the Netherlands, I assume. It's a bit of a 4-way split, with 3 songs each from PETER R DE VRIES, AARTxSTAARTJES, CHAÕSMELCK, and KRÄNKER. If I'm following the tracklist correctly, PETER R DE VRIES and AARTxSTAARTJES are the powerviolence bands. I would classify them both firmly as pizzaviolence, a term longtime readers of mine will understand. Both being named after Dutch TV media personalities (a hallmark of pizzaviolence) there are interstitial samples of, I assume, these respective personalities speaking lifted from TV or documentaries. Not my favourite stuff, but certainly they are having fun. FFO: SPAZZ, etc.

CHAÕSMELCK (Chaos Milk!?) is a bit more interesting. Strange vocal effects, noisy guitar, odd song structure, and yes there is a d-beat. Maybe a GISM influence? I expect this band to be really cool live. Their last song was my favourite. Finally KRÄNKER, the most straightforward band name of the comp starting out with a song titled "Drop The Bomb" complete with intro war sound samples. I'm expecting some war bad d-beat and that's what we've got. The vocals are almost guttural and the drums are loose, so loose it's charming. It almost sounds like the drummer fucks up in the middle of the first song but that's just how the song goes.

I don't think this comp made it on any year-end best-of lists, but that's not the point of a comp like this! A comp like this is simply the essence of the DIY spirit in any smaller scene.

—Martin Force

V/A – Vending Machine (Live at ABC) CS

Having wrangled enough bands to release 2.5 of 'em myself (plus an incredibly ill-fated 2x CS that will never see the light of day due to the endless call-outs and sexual misconduct that plague hardcore punk, to say nothing of literal conflagration and potent personal shortcomings), I can confidently say putting together a compilation is among the most thankless and unenviable tasks someone in DIY can engage in this side of show promoting.

That a few people found it prudent to document a certain time (post-pandemic), a certain place (LA's ABC Rehearsal Studios), and a certain thing (the hardcore punk bands that haunt said locale) is inspiring, a blatantly local documentation rooted in championing your friends and peers that seems fewer and further between every day. That they took the time include a 16pg zine with art from each band and a brief interview detailing the thought process behind the project? Chef's kiss. Can't ask for more, however it looks (pretty cool!) and whether or not the bands included lyrics (they did not).

PERSONA played with in Batangas City (on the drummer's birthday!). Started by sisters Yeumi (guitar) and Kaz (drums) during the pandemic when they were 11 and 14(!!), later replacing their dad with bassist Naya. They are the only punks at their religious school and have gotten some of their peers interested in punk. They don't stand for bullying and always stick up for the underdog. Their parents are punks and the scene is supportive. Themes: anti-machismo violence, anti-celebrity culture, overcoming shyness, rage for people who kill stray cats. I don't recommend SIEGE fanzine unless you are entertained by culture war wingnuttery but I highly recommend YOUTH ALTERATION.

*the video for YOUTH ALTERATION — NINE was partially filmed at our show together :)

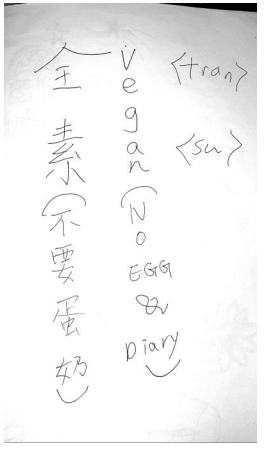
GRIEF (WINDMILLS #8) – Josel Nicolas, Quezon City, Philippines (2023)

Josel/Josie is a comic artist who volunteers at a zine shop and library (Independent Study/Gantala Press/Library Una) at Chapter House, a comradely DIY space in Quezon City (a city in the Manila metro area). I gave Josel copies of the Chaos Star for the library and he traded me a stack of his comic, about a 35-year old bespectacled animal guy's struggles through the death of his parents, caregiving, creativity, ambivalence towards god, and the often thankless task of making komiks.

SUCK GLUE BOYS Taipei, Taiwan

SUCK GLUE BOYS are a DIY collective from Taipei who put on punk, noise and art shows, film screenings, and printmaking workshops ("PRINT FAST DRY YOUNG"). They are named after a local street punk song. They formed in 2020 to organize renegade gigs and have since expanded their activities. They are hardworking and inspiring, promoting scene unity between subcultures and across borders. Willie gave us a stack of zines made by the collective, as well as t-shirts and a really beautiful memorial block print he made of Leslie Feinberg. (In the last issue of my zine, I reviewed Notes of a Crocodile by Qiu Miaojin, an influential Taiwanese lesbian writer who died young in the 90s, who I learned is from the same town as Luhung, a SUCK GLUE BOYS collective member and noise musician. Trading my writing about a Taiwanese dyke ancestor for Willie's homage to our New York elder on the other side of the world was a powerful synchronicity).

L) Luhung shows us how to ask for vegan food in Mandarin R) SUCK GLUE BOY solidarity banner



Outlining the Wavement: An Exhibition of Punk Flyers from Taiwan and Japan (2023)

This zine is a bilingual (English and Mandarin) collection of 13 DIY punk artists' flyers that were exhibited in an art show organized by SUCK GLUE BOYS at TWIN PEAK records in Taipei. The introduction asks,

"besides music, what is 'punk'? We believe that the true soil of creativity lies in the idea that you can do it yourself, and it is this notion that has given rise to unique visual artworks of nonconformity. ... 'Anyone' can participate in the scene and express themselves in 'any way' they want!"

A beautiful full-color perfect-bound zine with contributions from familiar heads like Yagi from UNARM and Kohei from innumerable sick prints, as well as new friends from tour: Tina Cho, drippy illustrator/frontwoman of SPIT, and chaos agent Khu Tsìng-Bûn, responsible for the iconic SUCK GLUE BOY drawing and hanging out with us on the sidewalk until dawn.

THE SOLIDARITY WITH PALESTINE IN PUNK SCENES – Chen Wei-Lun (2024)

A history of Palestinian resistance to Israeli apartheid leading up to October 7, 2023, followed by the lineage of international punk solidarity with the Palestinian cause throughout the decades and a scene report on current efforts of the Taiwanese scene: benefits, compilations and artmaking, including many beautiful collectively-made block-printed banners. SUCK GLUE BOYS wasted no time making their position heard, immediately organizing a solidarity event in November 2023 to raise consciousness in the DIY scene around Palestine, combatting misinformation coming from the Taiwanese media and government. The zine concludes with a playlist of pro-Palestine punk tracks (from Oi Polloi to Pure Terror) and Asian DIY solidarity compilations. The zine is free to download and distribute (and also featured here).

PERSON(A) INTERVIEW ZINE

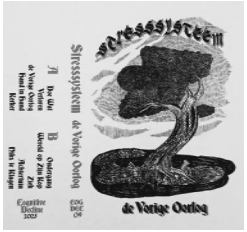
In Mandarin. Shoutouts to 538, Migrante Network, Chaos Computer, Punk HQ, ABC No Rio, 2020 Uprising, and many friends' bands from NYC. Beautifully printed, this was a generous gift to the tour and a true inspiration to how much thought, intention and excitement can go into receiving a touring band and making their message accessible locally.

RUANG MERUANG Fanzine Vol. 1 STAY IN SANITY Indonesia/ Taiwan (2025)

RUANG MERUANG ("living room") is a fanzine put out between punks in Indonesia and Taiwan with the goal of strengthening ties between scenes. Later issues are in Mandarin and Indonesian, however the first issue is in Indonesian and English. I eagerly swooped the last copy at the Taipei show. Interviews with So-Cal emotive crust revivalists LAGRIMAS, Indonesian/Taiwanese noise duo SUNDIALLL, an in-depth interview with our new friends SUCK GLUE BOYS, among others. I felt shy to talk to the creators of RUANG MERUANG, they seemed cool, mysterious and focused. The general consensus in Asia is that Indonesia has an amazing scene, is very supportive and attentive to scenes in the west, and that we would do well to pay more attention to what is happening there

good to be reminded that good punk comes from everywhere, and you are probably missing some of the best right under your nose (in this case KOMATIITE are probably jamming within a 6 hour drive of me, although a horrible border separates us).

—Martin Force



STRESSSYSTEEM – de Vorige Oorlog

Netherlands metalpunk. Metalpunk in that the drummer is using a double-kick pedal for sure (even some metal blastbeats in the first track). Not so much metalpunk like SACRILEGE or LIFELESS DARK although the tape does close with a cover of "Lifeline", I find the rest of the tape draws from a broader metal influence (maybe later thrash) than just SACRILEGE. It's much more like metal played by punks (one of the best kinds of metal). I wish it was a bit crustier, a bit dirtier, a bit stenchier but that's just a matter of my personal taste. A great tape to check out if you wanna hear DIY punks doing metalpunk in the Netherlands.

Available as cassette from Cognitive Decline

—Martin Force

THE DISSIDENTS / D.O.V.E. – A Better World Split

First side, THE DISSIDENTS. Earnest political lyrics with a melodic delivery. Contextually you are thinking it's crust, but the songwriting is melodic/melancholic punk. Being from Montreal, I'm thinking of BALLAST and PREYING HANDS. There's a bit of synth sprinkled in which brings to my mind Montreal's defunct FACIALS, but really just their BURNING KITCHEN cover. HEARTSOVER would probably be a better comparison from the early 2010s Squalor scene, but at this point probably only two people reading this know what I'm talking about. Righteous earnest lyrics delivered with passion, anger, and lots of singalongs.

D.O.V.E. is a band from California who sound like they are from the UK? I believe they are one of those bands I've only heard of from patches. But I mean no disrespect, I must back a 2025 release that opens with a track called "Beyond Speciesism". It's anarchopunk. Although the VENTURES-esque riffing in "Wind Of Revolution" makes me feel like this is more on the peace punk side of things. D.O.V.E. is slower and more meandering than THE DISSIDENTS, so it's a really nice pairing. The lyrics are just as earnest and delivered with the same conviction. FFO giving a shit about things.

It's worth noting that this record is dedicated to Daryl Hardcastle of OMEGA TRIBE who passed away in 2024, and to Bill Chamerlain, guitarist of THE DISSIDENTS who passed away in July 2025 – making this a posthumous release, if I understand correctly. So this is a special release!

Available on DC and LP from Grow Your Own Records.

—Martin Force

THE SMARTHEARTS – Not Forgotten 12" EP

During my first year as a public school teacher I have faced many headaches: the bureaucracy and over arching shadow of Chicago Public Schools, my students asking me if I am in high school or if I am 80, writing IEPs. HOWEVER, as I sit on my bus to teach another day to middle schoolers I continue to listen over-and-over to the most recent Power Pop masterpiece by Philly rockers THE SMARTHEARTS.

REVIEWS

Ivan Hitch showcases his perspective as an adventurous young documentarian of Philadelphia. Friends, tags, landscapes and some archival graffiti photos make up this zine. Many names to look forward to like spy one, nemel, orb, hazel, item, IAO, SOS to name a few.

Keep an eye out.

Free the world 2k25 by Willow Gallagher is a visual packed full of machines, people, creatures, plants, daily horrors and so much more. I enjoy these kinds of detailed maximalist draws. Pockets of jagged lettering announce political ideas, daily struggles and systemic horrors.

My favourite page illustrates the pollution of our atmosphere by satellites.

I look forward to seeing more.

—Slim

GUL – Demo

Like RUDIMENTARY PENI if they were from Catalonia. Four dreary, driving, a bit spooky, songs. Recorded at home (with a drum machine I think?). More people should just sit down and make music like this. At home, all written, recorded, produced in one room, maybe in one afternoon. I really like it. I hope we get more from GUL.

Cassette released on Atemptat Sonor

—Martin Force

KOMATIITE – Famine Pact EP + Demo

KOMATITTE – I looked it up. It sounds like a borrowed word from some language that would put an umlaut on that O or A but it's actually a type of volcanic rock. Your first assumption from the name would be correct though: this is fast Nordic-influenced d-beat hardcore. The guitar is "too loud" (good) and the gruff vocals are low in the mix. I expect no less than 4 guitar cabs on stage for this band for proper face-melting. I am biased against guitar solos but the weird and quick ones they deploy are great.

The Famine Pact EP is 5 quick songs with 1 obligatory mid-tempo slammer. The undated Demo which was also sent in preserves the same ratio, with a noticeably lower-fi sound. Blown out drums and I assume it was recorded live or on a 4-track in a basement (or a barn?). Yes this is band is from rural Maine, which is awesome both because it's always

(and stop only touring Japan!). This in-depth and intentional bilingual, international DIY zine proves the point further.

GAY GUERRILLA #3 San Francisco, CA, USA (2025)

GAY GUERRILLA is a love letter/altar to Eyevee, a continuation of her newsletter by her friends after her death last year. Eyevee was a trickster criminal girl child breathing real life into the San Francisco Mission District against the grain of the city's sterilization, which her crew continues to do. A chaotic b&w 11x17" zine spraypainted multicolored around the edges, cut-up of her drawings and writings with contributions from living friends and favorite references — Jean Genet, Kaliflower (SF queer commune and freaky newsletter of 1970s), named for a piece by avant-garde composer Julius Eastman. What forms is a nonlinear collaboration that cuts through the veil, where lost friends and spaces continue to shape our living reality. GAY GUERRILLA is the embodiment of love for a friend who lives on through the words, actions and attitudes of her people.

BROWN RECLUSE VOLUNTEER GUIDE Oakland, CA (2025)

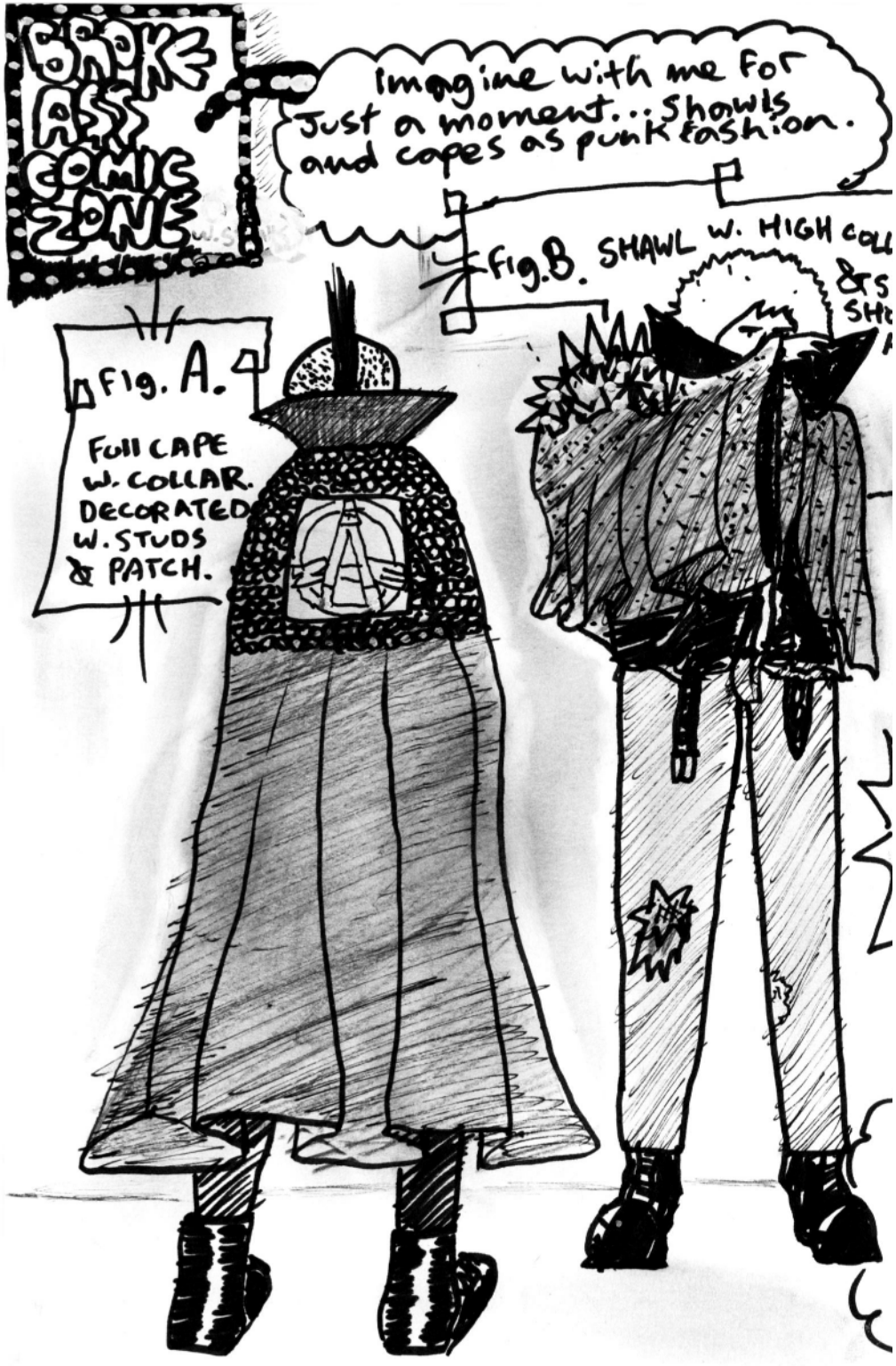
BROWN RECLUSE ZINE DISTRO is a zine distro for and by QTBIPOC zinemakers. BRZD formed in the 2010s in response to the liberal white feminism of 90's riot grrl and the sexism and racism of anarchist/punk scenes in the Pacific Northwest. It was started by Xiamara Chupaflor and is now run by Ari and Rufino in Oakland. I was lucky to hang out with Ari (La Bola de Cristal, MRR), Elsa, Zuli and Romeo at the distro studio when I was in the Bay and trade stacks of paper and cute stuff. Ari is a no-bullshit zine lifer whom I love and respect very much. The distro has expanded beyond their expectations since 2020, when they committed to offering free printing services to Black zinesters and movement organizers and gained a ton of new readers and subscribers online. This zine explains how the distro functions and how to contribute as a volunteer, and offers a framework for running your own distro — how to keep track of logistics and not exploit yourself too much in the process. Of interest to people committed to their ethics who are trying to navigate growing projects through shady institutions and unspoken power imbalances.

signal: @BrownRecluseZineDistro.04

COSMIC SLUDGE #2 + SAPLING Elsa Trash Oakland, CA, USA (2026/2025)

Elsa Trash is one of my favorite artists. We met on the internet 15 years ago as gay noise freaks who made zines. Since then, we both left our hometowns and got to be real-life friends on the West Coast. These quarter-size zines mark her celebrated return to comix after several years prioritizing her noise punk/no wave band INVERTS and becoming a mom! SAPLING is a short wordless comic in which a smiling three-eyed, two-nosed, two-mouthed mommy at the bottom of a staircase watches over a wiggling child-shape meandering in the garden. COSMIC SLUDGE #2 is a full-color "automatic comic" featuring Elsa's multi-faced girl-selves compelling us to stop cop cities everywhere and keep going. In spite of the extermination fantasies of our enemies, these small zines are a testament to our continuity and a good reminder that we actually do love drawing.

Long live freak international underground connection!


BRIKE ASS COMIC ZONE
Imagine with me for just a moment... Shawls and capes as punk fashion.
Fig.B. SHAWL W. HIGH COLL
Fig. A.
FULL CAPE W. COLLAR. DECORATED W. STUDS & PATCH.

shared with 3rd parties. They know exactly when you arrive at the show! They track your interests and desires. You are encouraged to link your account to your Spotify or Apple Music so they can provide better algorithmic recommendations of shows you might want to go to. DICE will keep doing this, and it will get worse and worse as they need to squeeze as much data out of you as possible.

This is the kind of data that gets collected, correlated, and sold to ICE and Palantir, by the way! You can't pretend this isn't true anymore.

Here's a fun thing in their privacy policy:

Your image or recordings *— we might get photographs, audio or video recordings of events listed on the DICE Platform. We may reproduce and/or publish your image (as part of a general photograph of an event) on the DICE Platform and in other promotional materials, social networking channels and other materials related to the DICE Platform;*

That kind of shit is just par for the course for apps and platforms like this. Most similar online ticket platforms are similarly evil. I'm picking on DICE because they really push you to install an app, and their cool hipster branding seems to have appealed to punk promoters. NO!

If you must sell advance tickets, there are simple, time-tested, DIY ways to take a bite out of these predatory, ticket-seller megoliths:

1. Sell some physical tickets at local venues/ shows/record stores before the gig.

2. If you must sell tickets online, use a relatively chill online purchasing option (like Big Cartel — I'm pretty sure they are still independent and have not taken VC investment).

3. Always ensure dedicated people have a way to buy tickets in person, with cash, either by holding some at the door or providing physical pre-sales.

Yeah, it's a little more "work" for everyone — too bad! The tradeoff is worth it, especially in situations where something like DICE is essentially the *only* way to buy a ticket for a show.

—Martin Force

Questions & Statements #1

2 zines that I can't put back on the shelf

I've been collecting various zines since my friend Will showed me "Drawings in bars" when I was a teen. This past year two that I can't seem to get enough of are a photo zine by Ivan Hitch and a zine of drawings by Willow Gallagher.

Their raw punk sounds spit over nearly everything, from heroin to the military, from the countries that perpetrate a genocide that we all know to the bosses ("who doesn't want to kill their boss?"). In the song "Mare Mortum" they talk about the amount of people who are left to die in the Mediterranean Sea while they are trying to reach the coasts of this horrible country.

DOLENT – S/T

Let's keep the noisy sounds on; this Valencia band is SO good. One of my favorites from last year. It is a modern-sounding hardcore punk sung in Valencià created by some of the people that helped to release a lot of punk around here in the last decades. They are pretty fast, and I think the guitars have an effect that is too loud for my personal taste, but besides that, I like it a lot. I've played this so many times already! I wish I could have gotten the tape, but I'm always late, and it's sold out now.

The track "Som l'amenaça" says something like "burn the flag, destroy Spain" (this is a free interpretation), which is all I want. In my opinion this band is a little gem produced in this area of the world that has been totally overlooked, but it's worth a listen or two. You will like it, I promise! I hope they keep doing this band for so long.

—Marginal

I Will Do My Worst #3

The first and only time I ever used the DICE app was to go to a show in New York City. It was the only way to get a ticket to a show I was traveling many hours and crossing an international border to attend. The only way to buy a ticket was by installing the app on a mobile phone — a deranged, dystopic idea. To purchase a ticket for this *hardcore punk show*, I needed not only a credit card, but a decently-new mobile phone running an OS made by Apple or Google. I needed my phone to be working at the venue so I could show a QR code of my ticket to get in. I would expect this for a mainstream Live Nation concert, but not for a punk show. At the time, I figured "only in New York" — a place where one is likely to encounter strange, novel experiments in capitalism. But since then I've started seeing DICE relied upon by promoters in Toronto, and I've heard it's used in London too. Not just regular promoters, like people booking hardcore punk gigs. What?? I suspect the only reason we haven't run into it much in Montreal is for Quebec cultural preservation reasons (here it would have to be a Quebec-owned startup called DÉS).

(For the sake of completeness: according to DICE you can buy tickets through their website without using their dedicated app, using your legal name and having ID with you, if the venue/promoter has a list of DICE ticket holders at the door. So basically good luck with that.)

DICE began as a London-based startup founded by an UMG industry label guy. Ostensibly the point was to make ticket sales easy, without dynamic pricing or resellers/scalping. Which is fine enough, but those aren't really problems I have ever encountered trying to buy tickets for actual underground hardcore punk shows.

Pretty quickly DICE got loaded up with hundreds of millions in venture capital investment. SoftBank, French billionaires, Google subsidiary co-founders. This is all just on Wikipedia. These people are not looking to "enhance the live music experience" or whatever, they are here to squeeze massive profits out of you. Last year, the whole thing was bought by Fever (another international/multinational ticket platform) after Fever itself raised hundreds of millions in venture capital from investors like Goldman Sachs.

This isn't some plucky independent startup run by a homie who's trying to make ticket sales easier. This is billion dollar business. When there is that much money invested, it's all about *making more money*.

That's why DICE is so app-centric. You must install the app to get into the show, allowing them to collect tons of your data, which is

I always thought there was a potential for a trend...
Fig. C.
"DRACULA" STYLE FULL STUDDED SHAWL W/O COLLAR.
DISCHARGE
AR
PIKE
OULDER
ATTACHMENT
Perfect for Leather weather.
WISH I HAD A CAPE THAT I COULD WEAR... NOW IM OUT IN THE COLD OUT OF VOGUE
MISSED THE MEMO
THAT PEACOAT SIMPLY WONT DO.
MANY DESIGNS TO CHOOSE FROM!!!
I haven't seen it but that doesn't mean anything.
ONE SIZE FITS ALL.
capesandshawls.com
STUNK

INTERVIEW WITH ERGOT

by Slim

I caught up with Ergot recently to talk about punk and punk graffiti.

Slim: When did you start writing Ergot?

Ergot: Started writing Ergot in 2006 in Minneapolis. First crew was called BS (Black Sabbath), which was me and my friends' high school code for smoking weed, then later code for doing graffiti... PEB (Pigs Eye Boys), TKG (The Kind Gents), PTS (Philips Terror Squad/Paint The Streets), were all my original crews with my scummy punk/rocker friends in southside Minneapolis. A bunch of misfits who'd drink cheap beer and go to punk shows in basements and warehouses — a story that's played out countless times across the world... I painted a lot on tour with my bands back in the day, doing spots in a bunch of cities in North America and Europe. And also traveled a bit in Europe/UK while staying in squats and all that, going to shows and painting. Once again — an archetypal story!

Wow love the weed smoking code. I feel like the graffiti story now is more be a skater. Is there a big scene of people touring, squatting and painting in the US? Who were the people that inspired you to join the graffiti movement?

Well yes definitely crews like KUK from the Bay Area or early KYT in Seattle/Minneapolis were more punk focused, maybe even political at times, playing in bands or adjacent to the music scenes there. Abhor KUK did the lettering in some DYSTOPIA records, for example. And if you can find the old KUK zines they're clearly sorta bike crusties. Early 907 crew from NYC also — they were linked to the Black Label Bike Club and had a chapter in Copenhagen who would do Bike Kill at K-Town.

horrible fascists, but they do a lot of shit. And now let me show you some punk music from this country that promotes anarchy instead of lame social democrats. If ESKORBUTO can't be voted for, let me show you who should be the ones I would vote for.

LAMPREA EXPLOSIVA – Anarquía de Montaña

From the mountains of remote Galiza, here you have a band that I really love and that I have been following and known since we (them and me) were kids. We met after so many years of some Internet relationship in Galiza, in a squat in a very, very small town (it has... 10 houses?) in the middle of a natural paradise. I always had a special love for duos (PIÑÉN or CIEMO, for example), and LAMPREA EXPLOSIVA, with their already long history and their parallel duo band with the same two people that change instruments (GIUSSEPPE), was always a special one. They also manage their own label, Caracol Negro!

LAMPREA EXPLOSIVA are for punks that love Thoreau, Emerson and Walt Whitman, but also Emma Goldman, Quico Sabaté and Kropotkin. Not many anarchists understand the secret words of the beating heart of the forest, its natural processes, and the art of waiting and letting things grow. I always hoped they were a seed for more Galician youngsters to get their instruments and make noise until their ears bleed, but as far as I know, only they did something like this beautiful eco-anarchist project in the last few years. Maybe the other ones are so hidden in their mountains that their sounds are unreachable for me.

In this release, LAMPREA EXPLOSIVA has a first track "Unha forza de combate / Guía breve dos mustélidos de Galiza", where they talk about another thing that I didn't mention before about our government. Their support of extractivism in our own land, the elimination of natural spaces for touristic projects, the constant help for fucked up real estate businesses, or any other economic profit from natural resources. Nature battles against these aggressions in so many ways, but also there are many people that do so. Defend your forests, deserts, and seas!

ARREST – Pobre i Perillós

An already classic band from Barcelona. They have been playing since the start of the previous decade, and their music and lyrics are amazing. If you're into early 80s UK punk like the first few No Future Records releases this is for you. The band has members of TOTÄLICKERS, CRUZ, CRIMEN DE ESTADO and SIBERIA. They also have a fake band that is pretty funny called STOICHKOV. Sometimes I can feel like I'm a Barça punk too!

In this EP there's an amazing track, "Mentirán" that summarizes pretty well some things I didn't explain in the text of this column. The rise in the cost of living, evictions, and how it feels to be a poor person in this country. That's why the name of the EP means "poor and dangerous". The lyrics are translated on their Bandcamp page if you're curious.

ROTURA – Al otro lado

ROTURA aren't a classic from the city of Barcelona yet, but I hope they will be. Watching them play live is always beautiful, and I loved this project since the beginning. They do a powerful melodic punk, very political, and have really catchy songs that have stayed with me since the first listen.

I wouldn't say that ROTURA reminds me of specific bands, but there's always an easy comparison of the vocals with ELEKTRODUENDES, but don't be fooled by these descriptions and listen to them! They sound very different in general terms. In my opinion, the lyrics of the songs are a big part of this band, and they also have them translated on their Bandcamp page. During the last year I've been listening to them nonstop. Also, they are in the Fediverse! The only band I know from here that has Mastodon and Pixelfed accounts.

KIRATXA – Giza Ustelkeria

From Euskal Herria, this "new" band is bringing the noise to this column. I missed them and the "pomada" that Oscar always carries with him when they came to Barcelona, I hope I have a second opportunity!

Columna Marginal — February 2026

The occidental world is so fucked up that it's making the president of Spain seem like a good president. Even if the decisions of this government are pure opportunism, and if it fuels the game of polarization that all right–wing politicians started, the (leftist) international opinion seems pretty good about Pedro Sánchez and his government. But that's what happens when everyone reads the headlines instead of the whole article.

Let me say this loud and clear: Spain is not an oasis of the left, and one of the reasons is the existence of the party that is in power nowadays. But that's a long story that I can't explain here. I'll let the next elections show you a totally different face of this territory.

Anyways, Spain sucks, and PSOE (the so–called "socialist" party of Spain) sucks too. With this party in power, we had:

1. Several massacres on the borders or in the sea, blocking migrant people from entering the country while rich people get in through planes. Amnesty International is still asking for some answers for 30 dead and 70 disappeared (in the border??) on June 24th of 2022.

2. Prosecution of alternative leftist or anarchist political projects, including several cases of cops infiltrating social movements. These cases were defended by a minister that has been accused SIX times by the European Court of Human Rights for not investigating tortures of police while he was a judge. This is the same guy that defends the previously commented massacres. Suspicious, right?

3. In the middle of a housing crisis, they gave LOTS of money to be able to pay the rents, and what happened? Oh, the miracle: landlords increased prices, and the result: rich people getting richer. It's impossible they didn't know, especially when so many of the known faces of the party are landlords. In general terms there's a really bad management of the housing crisis just to protect landlords.

4. Corruption. Corruption is everywhere. All kinds of cases appear around the president, and yes, maybe many are created by a toxic political environment that lies to get votes, but many aren't.

5. Spain gave all the power to Morocco to do anything they want with Western–Sahara, leaving the Sahrawi people totally abandoned (even more than before). Even worse, this was used to improve relationships between the two countries and make Morocco control the border so Spain does not have to do the dirty work. Colonialism and racism from a "socialist" government.

6. More externalized dirty work: they opened jails for migrants in Mauritania. These jails were paid for by the government, yes. And they will hold minors inside too, yes, something that can't happen here (but it's done in another type of prison for migrants called CIEs). So poor racialized migrants can't enter our border, or they will be killed, prosecuted, brutally assaulted and/or raped, and if they survive, they will work like slaves for people that don't want to pay taxes and won't ever be held as criminals. The same government that allows this also goes to other countries to create cages so fewer people cross two borders and/or get in a boat that is a nearly certified death in the Mediterranean.

7. Bought military technology from Israel after advertising an arms embargo on that country. Also, a few years before, they sold a lot of military stuff to Saudi Arabia that was used to bomb Yemen.

Etc.

I could continue writing about this, but I just don't want to. Spain sucks. PSOE sucks. Many think they are nice because they aren't

I would go to a DIY warehouse for shows in high school called the Mala in Minneapolis and see tags by OZE108 907, Nimz HM, REHAB HM, YOUTH RVS (another Mpls crew worth mentioning), and I was mystified. I felt like I had discovered these two underground worlds that I'd imagined were separate, but here they intersected and it made me feel very at home.

I later traveled around Europe and saw lots of Nimz stuff. I think he may have been in 907 too. He's still got a spot partially riding on the highline in NYC.

Has the avenue you pushed stylistically always been accepted or have you had some battles?

Graffiti is interesting because you have so much personality wrapped into it if you're able to decode it. What a person paints on, the colors they use, how it's placed, the style of the letters themselves, all tell a story once you can read all the cues. I personally see lots of value in graffiti when I can see a full story in a single piece, like an individual screaming about their life and their interests. So being able to fuse some colorful, intricate piecing styles with a more raw punk bombing essence was a way for me to tell my story in a satisfying way.

There was always a little bit of funny commentary from either side, like I should cut back the drips on a piece, or I shouldn't put bubbles in the street spot. But I think at the end of the day the attempted fusion was appreciated by both sides

I should also say that none of this was really conscious at the time. It's only looking back years later that I can see that I was mixing this stuff together. Back then I was just trying to have fun with letters and keep things interesting for myself.

What's your best moment from graffiti and what's your worst moment?

Hard to pin down a single best or worst moment, but I guess in general best is whenever you get into a flow style-wise and with getting over. Climbing down from something and looking up and what you left there and feeling self actualized. Worst moments for me are when you're caught in someone's beef and you think they're all silly, or losing friends to ego or social pressures.

I do have some getaway stories and getting caught stories too...

How'd you get into punk and what made you feel like it was your community ?

I sort of can't remember, but initially I think i just vibed hard with music and then went down a rabbithole from NIRVANA and stuff towards heavier music, looking for something specific but not knowing what it was. Finding bands that had politics in the music really clicked with me. And it was like this crazy underground society (similar to graff) that seemed to have lots of meaning and feeling. The catharsis of the music itself and also meeting other kids who were sort of fucked up and damaged made me feel at home for sure.

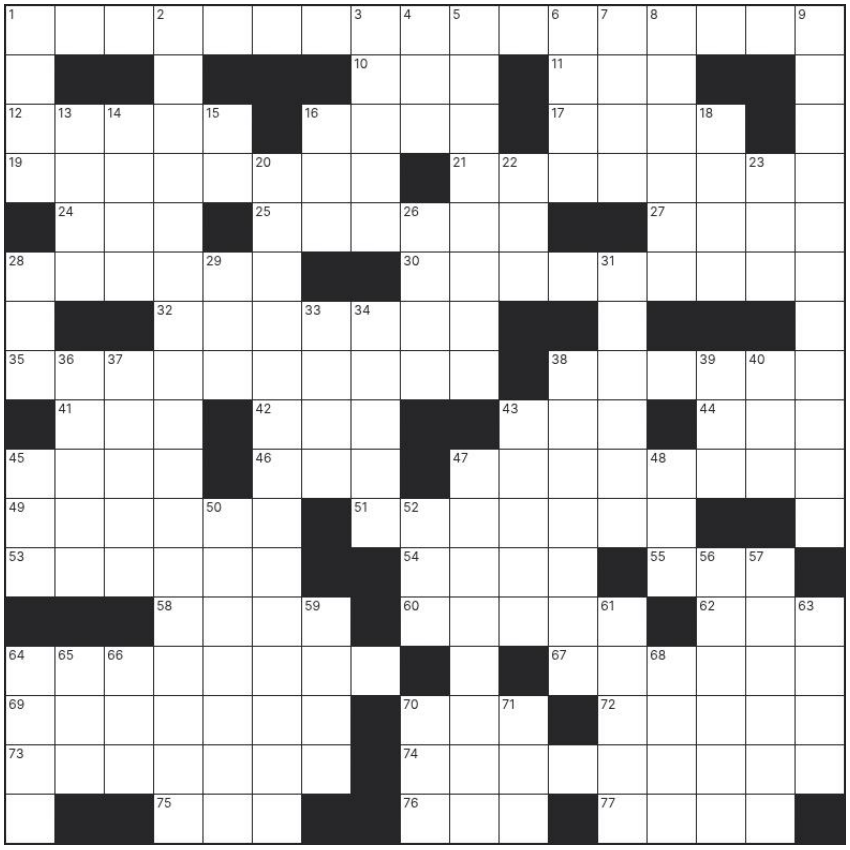
I found out about bands like TOWER 7 and FLOWER through your illustration work. Not to mention the incredible cover you did for DESTRUCT's record Cries The Mocking Mother Nature. When did you begin drawing flyers and doing illustrations for bands?

43. Where lyrics get jotted down.
44. An affirmative you'll hear in Quebec.
45. Store chain for "borrowing" nice camping gear.
46. What you might mutter after seeing a mediocre band.
47. Acronym seen on many show flyers.
49. A post punk or egg punk band may have this.
51. A hardcore kid's favorite dancy dance.
53. Last word of a Germs song that is the title of the 2007 Darby Crash biopic.
54. Synonym to cherub, missing a middle letter.
55. Boston hardcore band, or an alternative to a hard drive.
58. Every anti authoritarian's favorite four letter acronym.
60. A class of happy pills.
62. Comes after "sub," "power," and "K."
64. What you may make your lentil soup in.
67. What members of LOS CRUDOS, SPITBOY, and THE BAGS all identify as.
69. Tough section of a bike ride.
70. FEAR played on this show in 1981.
72. Double word new wave outfit.
73. Homophone for hosts of an event.
74. Ease of use.
75. Abbreviation for magazine that originated from a Berkeley, CA radio show.
76. The name of Vivienne Westwood's infamous clothing boutique from 1974–1976.
77. "This," or "um" in Spanish.

Down

1. An essential for punk guitarists. Less so for a folk musician.
2. Series of 1970s punk fests, tours, and carnivals in rebuttal to the far right National Front.
3. Healthy fruit eaten in a bundle.
4. Alternate to "hey."
5. The first three words to DEVO's existential query.
6. The name of CRASS's farm cottage.
7. What J.K. Rowling is.
8. It's exposed many times when singing "YMCA"
9. What every guitarist hopes to have when putting together a song.
13. What you may need an hour before a gig starts.
14. Another word for sea, minus the last letter.
15. US west coast town abbreviation.
16. A bad customer doesn't do this.
18. Prefix with masochism.
20. An essential tool for all zine makers.
22. Lord of the Ring's humanoid monster.
23. Certification abbreviation.
26. Intergovernmental military alliance that Tankies hate.
28. WU TANG CLAN Member, Robert Diggs, nickname.
29. Emo band, Joan of ___.
31. An elite potluck would have a table fully dedicated to toppings for making this frozen treat.
33. Lake bordering US and Canada.
34. Alternate to "see ya" when the day is over.
36. 1970 song by the Stooges, and contemporary NYC venue.
37. Second half of the name for the"decentralized anarchist collective of autonomous cells," started in 1996.
38. SLC Punk (1998) main protagonist actor, for short.
39. 4chan board that Qanon emerged from.
40. The status ___.
43. Insult you use towards someone fake.
45. Web feed letters.
47. What screamo vocals lyrics "sound" like.
48. A gamers technical annoyance, if the number is low.
50. Obnoxious and outspoken crowd member.
52. The last word in the "same" repetitive line in TALKING HEAD's "Once in a Lifetime"
56. Cheap airline or first word in a Miyazaki film title.
57. What you may do when a mutual aid request is shared with you.
59. a Dom and a CEO both do this.
61. First name of punk filmmaker Benning, novelist Z. Smith, and singer of GLOSS.
63. The GENUWINE song.
64. Pool stick.
65. What you set on a record player.
66. Guitar amp detail, measured in .
68. Oklahoma city, minus the last letter.
70. A shady person.
71. Slack.

THE COUNTERFORCE CROSSWORD #1 *by Crash JT*



Across

1. What many punks have on their bodies.
10. 1920 play by Čapek that coined the word robot.
11. Suffix for the intensification of “funny.”
12. Shoes that have a sports mode.
16. DIY musical gift to make your crush.
17. What you might fold in a protest.
19. What you challenge a skateboarder to do in passing.
21. A group of canine furries, perhaps?
24. US narc cops, for short.
25. First band on the lineup.
27. No ___ Records, pop punk label.
28. National leader targeted by many 80s punk songs.
30. Your forefathers.
32. Original director of cult horror classic, Suspiria (1977).
35. 1971 prison uprising in New York.
38. If writing songs in an ABCD structure, reaching these letters means you’ve gone too far.
41. VAN HALEN, briefly.
42. Amp and gear set up.

Thanks. I started drawing flyers and doing punk art in 2013 or so. I’d done some designs for my bands like collages and simple layouts but decided I should try to push myself a bit, and was inspired by some classic punk illustrators. Plus I started working with Shock at his screen printing studio and wanted to make posters and shirts for my friends. It was pretty chaotic for years, trying to do punk art, paint graffiti, do music stuff, and drinking a lot and all that. But I think I found a better focus at the end of the pandemic.

I did some logos and art for WATCHLIST, and some of the newer bands from NYC, and hope to keep it rockin.

Could you tell us a bit about ICBM (the most punk graff crew)?

Ok, about ICBM —

Started by zigzag and wombat pre-pandemic. AMEBIX reference. It was pretty important to be like a “real” graffiti writer but also actually down with DIY punk and active within that world to some degree. I remember when I met Cancer Carl he was wearing a NO SECURITY shirt. Pesoe sets up gigs. A lot of other members play in bands and stuff. There’s also a political bend to it all and importance on critical views of society. I suppose it’s just trying to keep an assembled group of people who are like actually down with the more underground forms of graffiti and music and on some anarchist/whatever-you-want-to-label-it political bend.

Could you tell us a crazy story?

Ok so one time, during the peak pandemic, I had this spot at Myrtle Broadway in Brooklyn on big boy while it was all shuttered up. I'd done a fill right on the corner there. And then it got dissed presumably by the business owners with "bitchass" and stuff like that. So on a Sunday at like 3pm I biked right up to it just to fix the fill quick. But I was suddenly apprehended from behind in a chokehold by a few people who live on the street there. Turns out some of them were sorta running security on the block, I think they got k2 as payment. It was like 4 or 5 guys holding me all crazy, and also this was peak pandemic so it felt pretty wild to be so close on top of the violent aspect. They dragged me into a smoke shop and locked the doors. And inside was like the kingpin guy all "well well well" gangster style. They took my glasses off my face and held my eyes open and acted like they were gonna spray paint my eyeballs. And they opened a door into the basement and said they were gonna throw me in. It was pretty hectic. Then a grandma from the block who'd seen it all started banging on the windows saying they needed to let me go. And they all got shook and also maybe respected the grandma so after a while they opened the door and threw me out. I thanked her and biked away. I biked past the same intersection a few weeks later and all the guys were still on the block and pointed and laughed at me. I sort of felt bad for them. I think graffiti takes you into places where you witness certain depths of suffering that aren't always easy to engage with.

The Steps

These steps are outlined in detail in the how-to online, but here's the overview to give you a taste! Less than 10 steps that take a couple hours and you've got your site online!

1. Sign up for your Neocities account
2. Download a code editor (optional but helpful!)
3. Install Faircamp
4. Organize your files
5. Create the Manifests
6. Run Faircamp
7. Preview your site and make changes
8. Build your site, for real
9. Put your site *online*

There's a lot more to say about this, but these are YOUR files. If it comes out that the CEO of Neocities is super invested in military tech and donating money to far-right politicians, you can pull your website off there and put it somewhere else!

We want to hear about more people building their own band websites. If you followed this guide, or you've built a website for your band using other tools get in touch to let us know! E-mail (the-counterforce@riseup.net), message us on Signal (counterforce.99) or tag us on Mastodon (@The_Counterforce@kolektiva.social)!

What You Need

To give you an idea of what's involved, here's what you'll need before you follow the how-to and build your site:

- A computer (sorry, you can't do this on a phone or tablet). It can be running Windows, MacOS (10.14 or later) or Linux.
- All your band's music and art files plus the accompanying text like liner notes (more on this later)
    - **audio files** for all of your music (.wav or .mp3 file formats)
    - **album artwork** for all of your releases, plus a cover photo which will go on the front page of your site — this could be a logo or a cool looking photo of your band (jpg, png or webp file format)
    - all the **text bits**: Grab all the "metadata" about your band and releases. A short description or bio of your band, liner notes, release credits, lyrics, upcoming shows. If you already have a bandcamp, a lot of this might just be there. It will save you some time if you have this all ready in some open tabs or dump it in a document.
    - **links** to sites where people buy physical releases or merch, or other places to listen to the music or watch videos, etc (whatever kinds of stuff you would put in a Linktree... minus all the unnecessary and creepy tracking).
- A few bucks/a credit card. Here's the cost breakdown:
    - A paid Neocities "supporter" account (what I'm recommending in this guide for hosting) is $5 US/month. Neocities has a free tier, but we'll need some of the paid account features to support a functioning music player and file downloads. One paid account gives you enough space to host many, many, many band sites (or other websites — your personal blog, your tattoo or show poster portfolio site, etc), so if that cost feels prohibitive or you don't have a credit card, share an account with a few or a bunch of friends and split it. You can also start on Neocities and move to a cheaper hosting option if you figure something else out down the line.
    - Neocities will give you a yourband.neocities.org domain, but you may want a fun or memorable custom domain for your site. Cost varies widely — you can get one for as cheap as $2–3/year or as much as you can imagine, but you probably shouldn't pick one that costs more than like $10–15 a year or you're not going to want to keep paying for it. There are several different domain registrars, I happen to use porkbun.com. Maybe you even already have a good or clever band domain that you've been paying for but never figured out how to do anything with, or that has some stupid Wix site parked on it (Wix is an Israeli company targeted by BDS, get outta there). Now's the time to put it to a good use.

HOW TO: MAKE A BAND WEBSITE WITH FAIRCAMP

by Taylor Joy

We recently published a step-by-step guide for making your own self-hosted band website, geared toward punks with zero knowledge about code or making websites. The full how-to guide is on our website here: https://the-counterforce.org/faircamp-how-to

Why make a band website?

Your punk band is already making demo tapes (right?), but what if you also want to put your music on the internet for people to check out, stream or download?

At time of writing, Bandcamp is heavily favoured among punks I know for being a free-to-use, straightforward and customizable place to share music online and maybe even get a few bucks from release or merch sales. Links to Bandcamp are ubiquitous in our review section. While Bandcamp as a company used to have a cool, independent vibe, in the last few years they were acquired by Epic Games and then Songtradr, and oops! did a little union-busting in the process. But compared to Spotify (the actual worst thing to happen to music, ran recruitment ads for ICE, CEO invested in genocide) or YouTube music (aka Google), well, you could do worse!

"Cool" alternatives to Bandcamp-like platforms have been discussed previously in the pages of *The Counterforce*. Any of these new cool-seeming platforms will move through the enshittification cycle like clockwork, be sold and bought by assholes who will profit off your art, use it to train AI, invest in genocide or fossil fuels, or finance the rise of the far-right. The apocalyptic scenario in which we entrust all our music to a centralized service that starts to fuck us over or disappears overnight has happened before and will happen again.

Making your own website for your music projects is a worthwhile project. It creates a presence for your music online that you can own, control, change and move at your own discretion. By doing so, you'll be helping grow a loosely-defined movement toward a cooler, freakier, smaller and less-corporate internet (sometimes referred to as the small web).

Plus, if you build your own site, you'll accidentally learn a bit about how the internet works in the process. One way that giant tech companies maintain their stranglehold on our lives and imaginations is by mystifying everything that goes on inside phones and computers, making it all seem impossibly complicated. Some of it is impossibly (and unnecessarily) complicated, but putting a simple website online isn't actually that hard.

The technical section of the how-to has two aspects — 1. building the site, and 2. putting the site online. I show you how to build the website using a software called Faircamp and how to put the website online using a hosting platform called Neocities.

If you have never made a website before, I think this is a pretty good "first website" project. The example site I'm using today — a site I made for my band RECALL (https://recall.rocks) — is my first successful, functional website, after many vague and incomplete attempts to do so throughout the last ~20 years. Assuming you have

access to all your audio/artwork files, you can probably make your site and get it online, all on a Sunday afternoon.

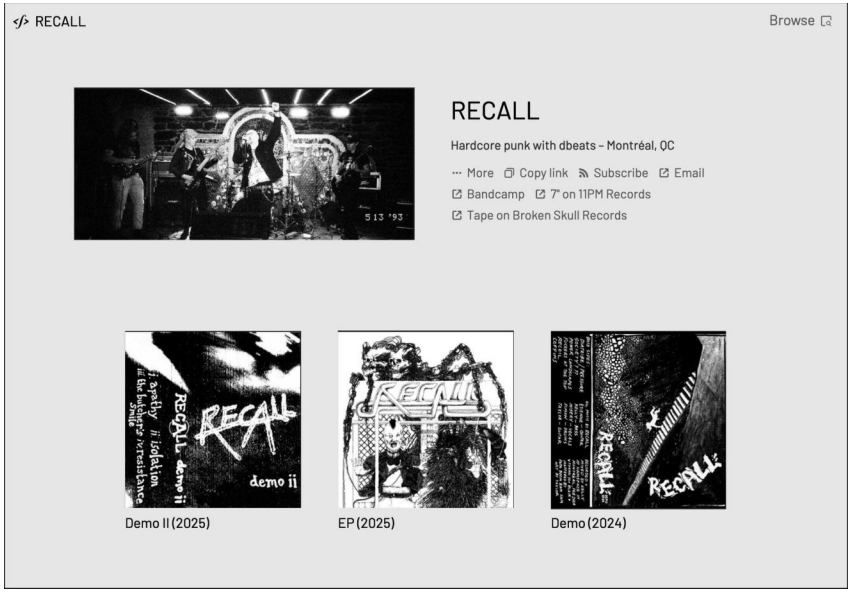
If you are already a "computer person" or someone who tinkers with static sites, I will just direct you to Faircamp's excellent manual (https://simonrepp.com/faircamp/manual)— I know a few moderately tech-savvy or just determined people who heard me talking about writing this guide and were just able to figure it out on their own from there. There are also links to a few other tutorials, which might be helpful if the way I'm explaining something isn't doing it for you. Even though there are other guides, I did want to make my own that is more geared toward the aspects that I think punks will care about and that is way more beginner-friendly than any of the other guides that exist.

What is Faircamp?

Faircamp is a Static Site Generator. Basically, it's a program that you download and run on your computer that'll take all your music files, images and information and spit out the HTML files that make up a website. You can then take these HTML files that the program generated and host them (aka "put them on the internet") wherever you want.

Compared to *dynamic websites,* which are very prevalent on the modern internet, *static sites* are very lightweight — they're cheap and require less resources to run, and they load better on poor internet connections (which increases accessibility for people who live rurally, who rely on cellphone data plans for internet access or who might want to visit your site from a place with less robust internet infrastructure.) Our website, the-counterforce.org is another example of a static site. DIY, cheap, accessible, and typically not focused on making money — static sites are very punk!

Back to Faircamp — here's what the Faircamp site that I built for my band RECALL looks like:



As you can see, we have a photo, a little description of the band, links to all the places to find us or buy physical releases, and a few albums that you can stream from the site or download.

Each release has it's own page with an player for streaming the songs, a Download link, liner notes and lyrics.

EP (2025)
Recall
Listen
Download
Liner Notes
Released August 22, 2025
Copy link
Purchase 7" from 11PM Records
Purchase cassette from Broken Skull Records
1. CORPSE 1:15
2. ACID RAIN 1:42
3. STRESS POSITION 1:34
4. CACOPHANY 1:32
5. INVISIBLE LINES 2:09
EP (2025)
Recall
Order 7" from 11PM Records
Order cassette from Broken Skull Records
RECORDED AT HAMSPACE IN MONTREAL, JANUARY 2025
♥ THANK YOU BLAIR ♥
MIXED BY SANTIAGO GONZÁLEZ AT FUERZA INOOBERNABLE
MASTERED BY SHIGENORI KOBAYASHI AT NOISE ROOM
ILLUSTRATIONS BY AL BARETO
THANK YOU: PAT - 11PM RECORDS, GAVIN - BROKEN SKULL RECORDS
AND EVERYONE WHO IS FIGHTING AND ORGANIZING FOR A BETTER WORLD

And here's some more examples of band sites that were built using Faircamp:

- https://streetg.love/s
- https://catharsis.band/
- https://nerve-war.neocities.org
- https://flatteeth.neocities.org

You can also make a "label" style page with pages for multiple artists and their respective releases. Check out the Demo Fest 2025 (https://2025.demo-fest.org) page or https://likeweeds.org for examples of how this looks.

In the full how-to online, I walk through the process of building this site together, and when you're done you'll have your own site that YOU own and can put wherever you want online.